

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the issues raised in the above referenced Office Action is respectfully solicited.

The rejection of Claims 1 and 3-5 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Bargfrede, 5 050 710 or Cunningham, 5 099 964 has been considered. Independent Claim 1 has been amended to include the features of dependent Claim 2, which was not rejected in view of either of the above identified patents. Thus, amended Claim 1 now distinguishes over the Bargfrede and Cunningham patents.

The rejection of Claims 1, 2, 4 and 5 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Rogier, U.S. Patent No. 4 610 331 has been considered.

Rogier discloses a wheel hub with a built-in brake. A shaft 37 is rotatably mounted within a fixed support sleeve or stub axle 11. A hollow body 12 located radially outward of the stub axle 11 rotates with the shaft 37. A brake assembly 21 is located between the stub axle 11 and the rotatable hollow body 12. Column 6, lines 34-37 discloses a splined coupling 31 between the hollow body 12 and the edge of its transverse flange 27.

Applicants' pressure-medium operated spring-pressure brake recited in Claim 1 includes a brake housing which has an outside body "into which are integrated a disk-brake arrangement, an axially movable brake-piston arrangement and a pressure-spring system". The outside body includes "at each opposite, open end area on the inside thereof an annular groove for reception of an axial retaining ring, between which are arranged the disk-brake arrangement, the brake-piston arrangement, and the pressure-spring system".

The above arrangement is not disclosed in Rogier. In Rogier, the hollow body 12 is not stationary, but rotates with the shaft. Further, element 31 is a spline coupling between the hollow body and the transverse flange. This element 31 cannot be considered a groove/ring as suggested in the Office Action.

For the above reasons, Claim 1, and Claims 3-5 dependent therefrom, distinguish Rogier.

The rejection of Claims 1, 2, 4 and 5 under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Daigre, U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0150674 has been considered. Daigre discloses a disk spring hydraulic clutch/brake having a fixed housing 20 that receives a shaft 40. The fixed housing 20 is open on each end and includes a series of steps for receiving a brake mechanism 70, a piston 80 and a spring 105. Paragraph 39 discloses that an oil seal 60 is located in a sealed cavity formed in the housing 20 as illustrated in Figure 4. Further, an additional contaminant seal is located in a sealed cavity formed in the housing 20 substantially next to the oil seal and axially outwardly thereof. The containment seal does not receive axial forces.

Applicants' amended independent Claim 1 recites that the "outside body has at each opposite, open end area on the inside thereof an annular groove for reception of an axial retaining ring". As discussed above, Daigre discloses two sealing rings adjacent each other at one end of the fixed housing 20. Further, one of the adjacent sealing rings does not act as an axial retaining ring, but rather provides a contaminant seal between the shaft and the housing. The other end of the housing 20 of Daigre receives end plate 30.

For the above reasons Claim 1, and Claims 3-5 dependent therefrom, distinguish Daigre.

Added Claims 6-16 further distinguish Rogier and Daigre. Claim 6 recites "a one-piece fixed hollow brake housing" including "first and second annular grooves adjacent the open ends thereof" and a number of other elements. The listed elements are not disclosed or suggested in the prior art in combination with the one-piece fixed hollow brake housing.

Independent Claim 6 recites "a first axial retaining ring inserted in the first annular groove for retaining said disk brake arrangement, said moveable brake-piston arrangement and said roller-bearing arrangement within said one-piece hollow

brake housing" and "a second axial retaining ring inserted in the second annular groove for retaining said disk brake arrangement, said moveable brake-piston arrangement and said roller-bearing arrangement within said one-piece hollow brake housing". The first and second annular grooves are recited as being "adjacent the open ends" of the brake housing. As discussed above, Daigre discloses having grooves at one end of the brake housing. Further the grooves of Daigre operate in a different manner than recited in Claim 6.

Dependent Claims 7-16 disclose additional features that, in combination with the features recited in Claim 6, further distinguish the applied prior art. For example, Claim 11 recites the hollow brake housing further comprising "a braking annular groove extending about the circumference of the inner chamber", and that "said brake ring is located in the braking annular groove". Claim 12 recites "said brake ring and said second axial retaining ring supporting said disk brake arrangement and said brake-piston arrangement". The applied prior art clearly does not disclose or suggest this specific structure.

Claims 13 and 14 recite that the one-piece hollow brake housing is monolithic. As discussed above, the applied prior art does not disclose a one-piece hollow brake housing having the claimed grooves, much less the one-piece hollow brake housing being monolithic.

For the above reasons, added Claims 6-16 distinguish the applied prior art.

As discussed above, Cunningham and Bargfrede were not used to reject Claim 2 and thus were not believed relevant to the amended claims. However, we offer the following comments.

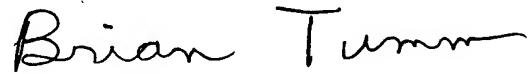
Cunningham discloses a multiple disk brake apparatus. Figure 1 shows a shaft housing 9 abutting a brake housing 25. A support plate 83, which may be considered a part of the shaft housing 9 abuts the brake disks 32. Thus, the brake housing does not support the second set 32 of disks. Further, it is unclear what elements in the brake housing 25 of

Cunningham correspond to the annular grooves recited in Applicants' Claim 1 and Claim 6.

Bargfrede discloses a wet disk brake mechanism for a work vehicle including an elastomeric drive belt 14. A shaft 48 interconnects side portions 42 and 44. As shown in Figure 2, the outer portion of the wheel assembly 42, 44 is rotatable with the shaft 48. Thus, the Bargfrede mechanism is similar to that of Rogier where a brake is built into a wheel hub. Therefore, Bargfrede does not disclose or suggest the brake housing structure recited in Applicants' independent Claims 1 and 6, much less the annular grooves provided therewith.

Further and favorable reconsideration is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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